

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
54078 Hwy 2 W
Glasgow, MT 59230

NOTICE OF DECISION

November 22, 2006

Environmental Quality Council
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Parks Division
Fisheries Division
Wildlife Division
Conservation & Education Division
Design & Construction Bureau
Commission Secretary
Regional Office Managers
Director's staff
Legal Unit
Law Enforcement Division
Lands Unit
Rebecca Cooper

Montana State Library, Helena
MT Environmental Information Center
Montana Audubon Council
State Historic Preservation Office
Hill County Commissioners
Hill County Planner
John Brenden (FWP Commission)
Mike Volesky – Governor's office
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation - Billings
Steve Doherty (FWP Commission)

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is proposed that Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) would enhance existing recreational improvements at the Fresno Tailwater Fishing Access Site (FAS). This site is located in Hill County, approximately 15 road miles west of Havre, on the south east end of Fresno Reservoir. Specific recreational improvements proposed in this project would include the installation of a disabled accessible fishing platform, relocation of existing vault toilet, removal of existing sidewalk, and upgrade existing gravel boat ramp.

A draft Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared by FWP for the proposed improvements. The draft EA was circulated for public comment for 38 days between August 18 and September 25, 2006. During this time period legal notices announcing the availability of the EA were published in the Havre Daily Newspaper, as well as State's electronic bulletin board.

During the public comment period FWP received one letter with written comments, this came from the Billings office of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). As both the partial and adjacent landowner of the property of this project site, BOR had several concerns and comments in reference to the proposed enhancement project. The following summarizes and addresses the comments of BOR:

- BOR was inadvertently left off the mailing list for the announcing of the availability of the Draft EA that FWP produced. This oversight has been recognized by FWP with a letter of apology to the Regional office and a Field office of BOR. Since then, appropriate contacts have been made between FWP and BOR in order to cooperatively pursue the completion of this proposed project.
- BOR has been listed in the Final EA as an “agency with overlapping or additional jurisdiction.”
- An incorrect ‘Range’ was stated in the EA for the Legal Description. The Final EA correctly has the legal description as: The site is located in section 20, Township 33 North, Range 14 East, Hill County, Montana
- More precise wording has been put into the Final EA that defines the difference in the consultation in which FWP and BOR has completed in providing cultural resource clearance in order to develop proposed improvements.
- The Final EA has specific language stating the FWP and BOR requirements that the potential hired contractor for this project must act upon in order to ensure the control of noxious weeds and other invasive species.
- In the Final EA, the existing boat ramp has been identified on the site plan.

Overall the BOR staff is supportive of this proposed enhancement project, and will be working with the Glasgow office of FWP in order to produce any written agreements required to complete the proposed recreational improvements.

Besides BOR, no other comments were received from the public. Therefore, my decision is to recommend proceeding with the proposed recreational improvements described in the EA. During the course of the project BOR will provide FWP with additional construction techniques. The draft EA will be finalized with the changes described above in this Notice of Decision.

We expect that the proposed improvements will be available for public use by October of 2007. If you would like a copy of the Final EA, or have any questions regarding the proposal and final decision, please contact me at the Glasgow office, 228-3700.

Sincerely,

Pat Gunderson
Region 6 Supervisor